

Ramona Street Commercial Building
(Pedro de Lemos Building)
520-526 Ramona Street
Palo Alto
Santa Clara County
California

HABS No. CA-2067

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PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Architectural and Engineering Record
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20243

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. CA-2067

RAMONA STREET COMMERCIAL BUILDING
(Pedro de Lemos Building)Location:

520-526 Ramona Street, between University and
Hamilton Avenues, Palo Alto, Santa Clara County,
California.

USGS Palo Alto Quadrangle, Universal Transverse
Mercator Coordinates: 10.574210.4144370.

Present Owners:

Mrs. Margaret A. Lyons and Mrs. Esther D. Morton,
2122 Waverley, Palo Alto, California.

Present Occupant:

520 Ramona Street, Blue Willow Antiques,
(front first story).
522 Ramona Street, Richard Elmore Design Associates,
(rear ground floor and mezzanine).
524 Ramona Street, Sabin Associates
(2nd floor rear).
526 Ramona Street, Boston Investment Corporation,
(rear 3rd floor).

Present Use:

The smaller building adjacent to the street is used for
an antique store. The rear building is used for offices.

Significances:

This commercial structure, built in 1925 by Pedro de
Lemos, was the first building to integrate the natural
surroundings into the contemporary architectural styles
in the Bay Area. De Lemos, a graphic artist, Director
of the Stanford Art Museum and the editor of the School
Arts Magazine, incorporated architectural fragments,
stonework tiles, grillwork and niches into a Spanish
Colonial Revival building to form an eclectic Spanish
Colonial Revival commercial structure. The artistic and
natural atmosphere of the structure is enhanced with a
courtyard containing trees and shrubs. This open space
became the focal point for the entire structure. It also
became a main attraction and aided the small enterprises
located in the building. The design of the Ramona Street
Commercial Building and early structures like it, set a
trend which is still being followed today.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1925. An article in the Palo Alto Times of October 15, 1925, entitled, "New Type of Business Building is Under Way," states that, "What promises to be one of the most interesting buildings in the city, an example of a new type of business building in America, is that now being erected on Ramona Street near University Avenue. This studio court structure will be built to incorporate a large oak tree. One story studio shops will be located under the tree and a three story building will occupy the rear half of the property. Space for six studio shops will be arranged in the building, four of the studio shops to have specially designed fireplaces."
2. Architect: Pedro J. Lemos. Designer and director of the museum and art gallery at Stanford University. (Palo Alto Times, October 15, 1925. Op. cit.) (Note: To clarify the designer's last name, his given name was de Lemos, but to be more American he dropped the "de." However, in the late 1920s a painter called Sidney Lemos resided in Santa Cruz. As Pedro did not respect his work or associations with him, Pedro took back the "de" in his surname, as people thought they were related.
3. Original and subsequent owners:

Legal description of the property:

"Parcel 3, Lot 22 and a portion of Lot 21, in Block 12, 30' on Ramona Street, by 120' along an alley parallel to University Avenue."

Book 548 of Deeds, page 294, February 7, 1922.

Grantor: Edward A. Vining. Grantee: Reta A. Lemos.

(Description as above) with a proviso that purchaser will pay the second installment of taxes for 1921-1922 of the County and Municipality.

Book 183, Official Records, page 69. September 15, 1925.

Grantor: P.M. Lansdale, et al. (H.F. Congdon as trustee of the Bank of Palo Alto.) Grantee: Reta Lemos.

Description as above. As the conditions for a promissory note have been met, the deed of trust indebtedness is satisfied. A \$10,000 promissory note is granted for this property, another on Ramona Street and another in South Palo Alto. The de Lemos daughters inherited said property upon the demise of their mother in 1961. The probate of the will could not be located after searching for the ensuing deed.

Official Records

Book 8085, page 556, March 18, 1968.

Grantor: Marie de Lemos Storm

Grantees: Margaret A. Lyon and Esther de Lemos Morton.

Description of property as above. In this transaction two sisters bought out the other's interest in this property and another on Ramona Street.

4. Builder: Damant & Son, a Palo Alto contractor.
George McLaughlin, maker of the tile walls.
Iron work, tiles Mr. de Lemos collected in Europe.
(Palo Alto Times, October 15, 1925, op. cit.)
Cost: \$18,000. (Palo Alto Times, September 12, 1925.)

5. Notes on original plan: No known plans for the building exist. Comparing the existing structure with a plan printed in the Palo Alto Times when the building was announced, there are many differences. However, de Lemos' daughters explained that their father did not adhere to his working drawings and would improvise as a building was being constructed. Among the differences are that the arcaded colonnade to the southeast and a dormer on the rear portion, (southwest), were not built. The northeast elevation in the back varies in that the original plan called for three small windows on the second floor, but there are five. The third floor plan showed a diminutive northwest Palladian inspired window flanked by a smaller window on each side, but in actuality there are two on each side.

The Gotham Shop, a woman's clothing shop, had leased the entire ground floor, (front and back), before the building was completed and was largely responsible for its interior design. The Gotham Shop chose Japanese and Aztec motifs for the salons devoted to wraps and gowns in the back. There were two salons, one in the Japanese style with soji screens and the other in the Aztec style. Dressing rooms were located on the mezzanine. To the front, "Quaint square paned windows like those of Liberty & Co. in London will frame the hats and frocks on display in the reception room with a stone fireplace and doorway into a replica of an Aztec garden. (Palo Alto Times, December 23, 1925, no page.)

6. Alterations and additions: In 1936 the second floor porch of the back section was enclosed and made into an additional room because of drainage problems. A large double casement window with eight lights with two single casement windows on each side with Aztec designs above were added.

In 1936 the Clothes Closet, a women's clothing store leased the whole ground floor. The building was completely remodeled by William Garren, Architect. The iron grill work was made by the Allied Arts Guild. The Clothes Closet opened on February 23, 1947. At about the same time the second and third floors in the back were made into apartment units. In 1968 the building was extended on the south side around the courtyard, thereby completing the encircling of the "beloved oak." It appears that at the same time a large permanent window was created in the ground floor on the northwest side of the building in the back. This window has 30 permanent lights on top beneath which are paired casement windows opening out. In between the casement windows are 20 permanent lights. This configuration replaced two small windows on the ground floor and one on the mezzanine. Also, on the ground level a small window was made into a wooden door with eight lights above and two panels below.

In 1937 the openings on the front store were changed. The entrance was changed from the street to the courtyard, (southeast), where a door was created by enlarging a window. The former door on the street was converted into a window with the lower part being filled in. On the northwest elevation, a door was filled in and an existing window was replaced with a 3'x 6' door.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure;

Pedro de Lemos (1882-1954) was a man who believed that art, architecture and nature can enrich life. A graphic artist, Director of the Stanford Art Museum and Editor of the School Arts Magazine, he also designed buildings to express his views. Basically in the Spanish Colonial Revival Style, his white stuccoed buildings have red tile roofs, and are constructed around patios and courtyards with trees and flowers, thereby relating nature to buildings. His structures are almost whimsical as they incorporate architectural fragments, stonework, tiles, grillwork and niches. De Lemos was influenced by Bertram Goodhue and the vogue that he started with his Spanish Colonial Revival buildings at the Panama-California Exposition in San Diego in 1915.

In 1922 de Lemos built a Spanish Colonial Revival studio at 535 Ramona Street for artisans. (In the early 1950s the building was added to and made into a commercial structure.) In 1925 this basic design was expanded into a commercial structure at 520-526 Ramona Street. De Lemos commented on his new Ramona Street building as a "fore-runner of a new type of business building making its appearance in America." (Palo Alto Times, October 15, 1925, op. cit.) Such a building type was already in existence in such places as Santa Barbara and Carmel.

De Lemos was the first to introduce such commercial structures to the Bay Area, and said "many merchants are finding that artistic buildings for business purposes are a large permanent advertising asset and that just foot space is not all that is needed toward successful merchandising." He is also quoted as saying, "build around the trees and you will give both your stores and Palo Alto a personality not found in other towns. (Palo Alto Times, June 12, 1954.) He was indeed forward-looking and set a trend which is still being followed today. The Clothes Closet, a tenant of the Ramona Street building advertised in 1937 that it was "in its present artistic shop, a Spanish-type building, which has been a peninsula showcase for years." (Palo Alto Times, February 23, 1937.) Several more Spanish Revival commercial buildings with courtyards were constructed on Ramona Street, making it still one of the most popular business streets on the peninsula.

Through the years de Lemos designed about twelve houses in the Palo Alto vicinity. Among these are his former residences at 460 Churchill Avenue and 110 Waverly Oaks, and a mediievally inspired apartment building on Cowper Street. He also designed a commercial building behind the Tuck Box in Carmel and a summer residence there at 7th and Casanova. All these structures remain. He also designed and was co-founder of the non-profit Allied Arts Guild in Menlo Park, which promoted artists' work and is still in existence today.

Designing buildings was just one of the many talents of Pedro de Lemos. He came to Palo Alto in 1917 to become Director of Stanford Art Museum and Gallery and served in this position until 1945. At the same time he was Editor of the School Arts Magazine, a monthly for school art instruction from 1919 until 1947. Its offices were in the de Lemos residence. Among the art books which he published are: Industrial Design Principles, Art Simplified, Applied Art, Pen Drawings, and Creative Arts and Crafts. De Lemos was also considered the western expert on Southwestern Indian art and the first who recognized its value. He recognized the potential of furthering Indian crafts and got the American Crayon Company to donate paints and art materials to the Indians around Santa Fe and Taos, New Mexico. De Lemos, with the assistance of local people, then taught and trained the Indians in doing art work. Travels to Europe and Central America were to study and collect arts and crafts. Students accompanied him to learn and study art and drawing. De Lemos was well known nationwide for his etchings, pastel sketches and oil paintings. He also developed "Reliefo", which produced relief and color at the same time and was sold by the American Crayon Company. De Lemos had discovered the formula on the end leaf of an early Italian treatise on art. Of his many art related talents, his daughters feel that his best ability was as a graphic artist.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Early views: Two black and white photographs, an exterior of the rear section before alterations and an interior of the Japanese room in the Gotham Shop, are in the Palo Alto Historical Society archives at the Palo Alto Public Library, 1213 Newell Road.
2. Interviews: Interview with Mrs. Margaret A. Lyons and Mrs. Esther D. Morton, daughters of Pedro de Lemos, at Mrs. Lyons' house, 2122 Waverley Avenue, Palo Alto. The daughters provided illuminating information on their father and on the various occupants of the Ramona Street building.
3. Bibliography:

a. Primary and unpublished sources:

Deeds, Santa Clara County Recorder's Office, 70 West Hedding Street, San Jose, California.

National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form. Pedro de Lemos House, 100-110 Waverley Oaks, Palo Alto, California. Prepared by Paula Boghosian and John Deach, Historic Environment Consultants, 2306 J Street, Sacramento, California, May 31, 1979.

b. Secondary and published sources:

Butler, Phyllis. The Valley of Santa Clara - Historic Buildings, 1792-1920. San Jose, CA: Junior League of Santa Clara, 1975.

Clothes Closet. A Memento from the Clothes Closet and the Court of the Beloved Oak. Palo Alto, CA: Published by the Clothes Closet, 1939.

Palo Alto City Directory. Palo Alto: Willis L. Hall, 1920-1925.

Palo Alto City (Map). Palo Alto: Published by the City, 1979.

Palo Alto Times, December 11, 1920; December 30, 1921; January 23, 1922; November 24, 1922; January 2, 1923; February 28, 1923; June 19, 1925; September 12, 1925; "New Type of Business Building Is Under Way," October 15, 1925; December 23, 1925; January 4, 1926; April 11, 1927; April 23, 1940; September 13, 1945; "La Pasea Court," December 13, 1950; February 10, 1954; Frank Taylor, "Tribute to P. de Lemos," June 12, 1954; "Pedro de Lemos" (obituary), December 6, 1954.

Polk's Palo Alto Directory. San Francisco: R.L. Polk & Co.,
1926-1950.

San Francisco Chronicle, October 26, 1952.

Sanborn Insurance Maps. New York: Sanborn Publishing Co.,
1924, updated to present.

School Arts Magazine, Worcester, Mass: Davis Publishing Co.,
1937.

Prepared by Robert Bruegmann
Project Supervisor
Historic American
Buildings Survey
Summer 1978

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This commercial and office complex, though built in the familiar Spanish-Colonial Revival vernacular of California, is built around a live oak tree, thus preserving the most distinctive natural feature of the site. The structure displays a varied massing, an abundance of architectural detail and texture and the use of architectural spolia.
2. Condition of fabric: Excellent

B. Description of the Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: Although the lot size is 30'x 100', the building has a three-story portion that measures approximately 46'x 30' and a one-story portion that measures approximately 23'x 54'. The tree grows from a courtyard in the one-story section of the building. The building is "L"-shaped.
2. Foundations: The one-story portion of the building has a slab-on-grade foundation. The three story portion of the building is founded on poured concrete foundations.
3. Wall construction, finish and color: The walls of this structure are stuccoed and painted beige. One small section of the one-story portion of the building is made of brick.

4. Structural system, framing: The building is built of honeycomb tile masonry units which have been stuccoed on the exterior. Pilasters on the interior of the three-story portion indicate that the building has some kind of structural columns, perhaps steel.
5. Porches, stoops and bulkheads: There is a stone stoop that has two risers before the entrance door to 522 Ramona Street, the ground floor suite of the three-story portion of the building.
6. Chimneys: There is a stone chimney that tapers towards its top in the one-story portion of the building. A chimney that has three fireplaces branching from it rises through the three story portion of the building. The chimney is exaggerated and picturesque in its height, is stuccoed and tapers toward its top. The chimney has cylindrical stacks made of tile at the top. A decorative tile is set in the side of the stuccoed chimney depicting birds in trees. Two stuccoed chimneys with simple stucco caps and cylindrical stacks rise in the back part of the building. They are undecorated and cannot be seen from the street elevation.
7. Doorways and doors: The building displays a variety of opening types. At the southeast wall of the first floor, a heavy, solid wood door with eleven panels arranged in a geometric pattern opens into the shop at street level. The door, furthermore, is decorated with iron studs. The door, a piece of spolia, has two lights in it, both of which are protected by a grille of iron arranged in a cross over them. The doors to the lowest suite in the three story portion of the building (522 Ramona Street) are double doors of heavy wood, with wooden sills, jambs and heads. Each door has eight lights, and an exaggerated rough wooden frame surrounds both doors. The doors and jambs are painted dark brown. In the northwest wall, there are five doors opening from the alley to the first floor. Two doors open into the street shop, and three open into the ground floor suite. One door to the shop is round-headed, is made of wood and has one large inset panel that is filled with diamond marquetry. Each diamond has a plain stud at its center; there are sixty-three studs at the centers of the diamonds. The other shop door in the northwest wall is a wooden door with one large glass light. All jambs and sills are wooden. Two of the doors to the suite at the rear of the structure are identical to the round headed door just described, with the exception that they are taller, and therefore have more diamond insets. The studs in these doors are rosettes, but a rosette does not occur in each of the seventy-one diamonds. The third door is a large, wide wooden door with lights; the lowest two panels have been filled with plywood. At the southwest wall is a modern hollow-core wooden door that leads to the stairwell to the second floor. There are four doors to suites at the second floor level. Three of the doors are heavy, solid wooden doors, each having three inset square panels in them with decorative molding around each square. The fourth door is a modern hollow core door with wooden jambs.

8. Windows: There is an extraordinary variety in the fenestration of this building; rarely do two windows share the same details. Because of this, it may be assumed that, like other elements of decoration in the building, the windows represent another use of discarded architectural elements brought together for this eclectic composition. The northeast wall of the street shop has three windows, two of which are "Chicago windows" with one large pane of glass flanked by three smaller panes on each side. The center window, which was at one time the entrance to the shop, is a fixed pane of glass in a wooden frame. In the northwest wall of the street shop, there is another Chicago window having the same wooden jambs, sills and heads as the northeast windows. Another window, adjacent to the fireplace, is a wooden casement window opening in, each panel of the casement window having twelve small lights. The entire window is protected by an intricate wrought-iron grille displaying both curvilinear and diapered ironwork. Two more windows in the northwest wall of the street shop are wooden casement windows, one opening in with twelve small lights. The other window is identical, but the interstices of the window have been filled with wood. In the southeast wall of the shop is one large window with wire mesh embedded in the glass. The window is new and has metal surrounds. Two large wrought-iron protective metal grilles fit over this window.

Description of windows in the three-story portion of the building: In the northwest wall of the first floor, there is a large stained glass window with one hundred eighty-eight lights, each light separated from the next by lead. The glass is violet, green, dark blue, and amber in color. This window has a wrought-iron grille over it with thirteen vertical members that appear to be spears corresponding to the leaded divisions of the window. Another window in that northwest wall, lower floor, is fixed glass in a wooden frame, the glass having wire mesh in it. A wrought-iron metal grille of simple geometry protects the window. Again in that wall, there are two casement windows below a twenty-four-light fixed metal window, that looks very much like an industrial or garage window. The paired casements of ten lights for each panel open out; the jambs and heads are all of metal. Another window in that wall is a very small window with three lights. The small casement window has a wooden jamb, head and sill and has a simple wrought-iron grating fronting it. There are two windows like this on the first floor. The remaining windows on the northwest elevation first floor, are casement windows opening in with ten lights each, and wooden jambs heads and sills. Again, they have simple, geometric protective wrought iron grilles.

At the mezzanine level of the northwest wall, there is a triple window flanked by two twelve-light casement windows above a heavy common sill supported on eight paired blocks resembling beam ends. The sill curves outward slightly below the triple window and supports a high curvilinear wrought-iron railing, forming a balconet. The triple window is composed of paired central four-light casements divided from flanking single four-light casements by broad wooden piers incised with carved decorative triangles. The one other northwest mezzanine window is composed of a pair of eight-light casements opening inward. All of these windows are covered by plain wrought-iron grilles.

On the second floor of the northwest wall, there is a small casement window of two lights opening out. All jambs, heads and sills are metal. Also on that floor is a metal casement window of eight lights in each panel opening out. The glass is colored - orange, dark blue, violet, yellow and clear glass. Two large aluminum-framed sliding windows have replaced older openings on the second floor. And again, five small aluminum-framed sliding windows, that are nearly square, have similarly replaced older windows. The two large windows flank the five small ones.

On the third floor of the northwest wall, there are five aluminum-framed sliding windows. The central window is the largest. All of these windows are in old openings. The center opening was a round-headed window before the new aluminum sliding window was added.

On the first floor of the southwest wall, there are three casement windows, all opening in. Two of these casements have fifteen lights, and one has eight lights. The windows have wooden frames, heads and jambs and are protected by wrought-iron grills. At the mezzanine level on the southwest wall, there are two windows, both casements opening in. One has a paired sash with eight lights in each. The other window has eight lights, opens in and has wooden sills, jambs and head. There is a wrought iron grill over the paired sash window. At the second-floor level of the southwest wall, there is a large aluminum sliding window replacing an older window that was probably much smaller. There are also two smaller windows, both single-light casements in aluminum frames opening out. One window serves as the access to the fire escape on the rear (southwest) wall. On the third-floor level of the southwest wall, there are three sliding aluminum windows in old openings.

At the second-floor level of the northeast wall, there are three windows, the center window being paired. The center window has two metal casements opening out. Two single casement windows, of eight lights each flank the center window. There are decorative lunettes above each window with diamonds and other geometry incised in the stucco and painted. The bay window facing northeast at this floor

is supported on five large beam ends, square in section, projecting from the wall. The window in that bay is a round-headed casement window opening in and has ten lights. The window frame is wood as are the sill, head and jambs. There are three dormer windows of the third floor facing northeast. Two of the dormer windows are round-headed casement windows opening in, each with ten lights. The southeasternmost dormer window is again round-headed, but has one large glass pane with fourteen small glass panels around and below it. The bay window of the second floor has a wrought-iron protective grill over it. The vertical members of the grill have flared ends.

In the southeast wall of the second floor, there are two metal casement windows of eight lights opening out. Also in that wall is a small niche, stuccoed on its interior, and surrounded by turquoise and dark blue triangular chips of glass. There is a small window beneath the exterior stair that rises to the second floor. The window has two casement sash opening in, three lights in each. A similar window occurs at the base of the stair but has large S-shaped iron scrolls perpendicular to the wall of the building as a protective grill.

9. Exterior stairways: An exterior stairway ascends northwest from the patio for a few steps and then curves to rise southwest to the second floor. There are twenty-seven stone risers in all. Most of the treads are concrete. The lower few steps are deeper than the rest and curve outward in a flowing contour. A fragmentary head in the Aztec style (apparently architectural spolia) supports the wrought-iron newel rod around which spirals the lower end of the decorative wrought-iron railing. The newel rod is designed to support two hanging signs. The topmost riser is embedded with eleven ornamental polychromed geometric tiles. The stairway widens at both top and bottom.
10. Roof shape and covering: The one-story street shop has a hip roof covered with tiles. The part of the shop nearest the three-story section of the structure has a shed roof that is also covered with tiles, and the most recent addition to the shop, which formed the fourth wall of the court around the tree, has a flat, built-up roof covered with cinders. The three-story section of the building has a gable roof, intersected at the rear at 90° by another gable roof. All these roofs are tiled. The second floor addition on what was a patio has a shed roof that is tiled.
11. Dormers, cupolas, towers: There are three dormers facing northeast on the roof of the three story portion of the building. All the dormers have the same dimension, have one rounded-headed window in them, and are stuccoed. Their roofs are tiled.

C. Description of the Interior:

1. Floor plans: The entrance to the front showroom of the street-level shop at 520 Ramona Street is at the east corner of the building in the southeast wall. The front showroom measures 18'-10" x 22'-2" and has a fireplace centered on its northwest wall. A wide opening in the southwest wall leads to an L-shaped passage around the southeast and southwest sides of the small court enclosing the oak tree, the trunk of which can be seen through sliding windows. Southwest of the passage is a showroom measuring 21'-6" x 17'-0" with a fireplace centered on its southwest wall. A small room and a washroom opening en suite northeast from that showroom, and another small room opening southwest from the front showroom flank the northwest side of the court.

The first floor of the rear building is numbered 522 Ramona Street and is entered through wide paired doors up two steps leading southwest at the end of the patio. The entrance leads to a high-ceilinged room measuring 21'-5" x 28'-4" that spans the full width of the building. There is a fireplace on the northwest wall, and there are two small washrooms in the west corner. A wide opening in the southwest wall leads to a second high-ceilinged room measuring 10'-4" x 18'-3". Both rooms have mezzanine balconies. An L-shaped stair ascends southwest six risers to a landing against the southwest wall of the larger room and thence northwest along that wall seven risers to the mezzanine level. The west corner of the rear building is occupied by an office measuring 18'-6" x 10'-0". Cellar stairs entered from the office descend southeast along the inside of the rear wall of the building, and an enclosed dog-leg stairway ascends northwest over the cellar stairs from a small rear entry to six winders and thence southeast to the second floor. The mezzanine is divided into two areas, a small balcony over the larger first-floor room, and a larger area (L-shaped) over the office and the smaller first-floor room.

The second floor, numbered 524 Ramona Street, is reached by the outside stairway from the patio. The northeast (front) end overlooking the roofs of the first-floor front building contains two rooms, one of which was originally an open terrace and is six steps lower than the rest of the second floor. The room behind the former terrace is entered from a doorway leading northwest directly from the outside stairway. A parallel doorway at the head of the stairs leads northwest to a room measuring 17' 8" x 21' with a fireplace centered on its northeast wall. A southeast door opposite that doorway leads to a narrow room running northeast-southwest that measures 27' x 6' 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". The southwest end of the second floor contains areas measuring 24' x 10'10" and 10'2" x 12'7" that are undivided from each other. The larger of the two spaces has a fireplace on its southwest wall. The south corner of the building contains the back stairs, and the southwest door at the head of the outside stairs leads to an enclosed flight of stairs to the third floor.

The third-floor area, numbered 526 Ramona Street, is entered through doorways leading northwest and southeast from the landing at the head of the enclosed stairs. The southeast room measures 27'3" x 6'4½". Most of the rest of the third-floor space is occupied by an irregularly shaped room measuring 21'2" x 26'9" over-all with a fireplace near the southwest end of its southeast wall. Two small northeast rooms are, like the southeast room, fronted by dormer windows. The middle dormer lights a room 6' x 13'4", and the northerly dormer fronts a room only 4'4" x 10' in size that is entered from a room measuring only 4'8" x 6'11" that is, like the middle front room, entered from the large irregularly shaped room.

2. Flooring: The street shop has three different kinds of floors, an old multi-colored quarry tile floor, a modern quarry tile floor, and a concrete floor with insets of multi-colored tile. The first floor suite at 522 Ramona Street has gray vinyl tile units, the stairs are carpeted, and in other rooms, the flooring is concrete, carpeting, or vinyl tile. The second floor is carpeted in the southeast suite. The northwest suite has both a stone floor and a wooden parquet floor. The landing at the top of the exterior stair has multi-colored square and rectangular tile set in a bed of concrete. The third floor is made of wooden tongue-and-groove planking.
3. Wall and ceiling finish: The street shop has stuccoed walls. In the front of the store, there is a heavy timbered ceiling; there is a lattice of heavy beams in both directions that support the hipped roof, whose inverted shape, is apparent above the beam system. In the ceiling of the new shop addition, there is timber placed in a herring-bone pattern. In the rear of the shop in the shed roof portion of the roof, the rafters are exposed and are very close-set. Above the rafters, one can see the tiles of the roof. In that flat ceiling portion of this rear room, there is again a beam lattice in both directions. The sheathing of the floor above is apparent above the beam system.

The first-floor suite has stuccoed walls and ceiling with a beam lattice of heavy built-up sections in the Spanish-Colonial Revival tradition. The second floor walls are also stuccoed, and the ceiling is a grid of wooden panels and moldings surrounding panels, a complex net of beams and insets. Some of the insets have been filled with accoustical tile and contain the lighting fixtures.

4. Doorways and doors: The interior doors are typically made of wood. Some are hollow-core modern doors, and some are older doors with panels, but there are no notable interior doors.

5. Special decorative features, trim and cabinet work: The theme of this building is special decorative features. The building has been crafted so that decorative glazed tiles, wall painting on stucco, carved wood, and ironwork are all part of the composition. Around the door to 522 Ramona Street, there is a decorative geometric carving of rectangles and within these, triangles. The linework forms an arch on the wall. In the rear of the street shop, there is a beam that supports a second floor addition that is built-up, and within a central panel contains a painted stucco decoration of geometry and birds. The designs are reminiscent of Indian art. There are four hearths in the building, all of them stuccoed and having stone bases. The structure has many wrought iron lamps hanging from it, no two alike.

C. Site and surroundings:

1. General setting: The Ramona Street Building is located one-half block from Palo Alto's busiest commercial street. The neighborhood is completely commercial, and imitations of de Lemos' building are seen on both sides of Ramona Street in this block.
2. Historic landscape design: The tree at the center of the building is the inspiration for the architecture.

Prepared by Robert Bruegmann
Project Supervisor
Historic American
Buildings Survey
Summer, 1978

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey in cooperation with the County of Santa Clara. The 1979 summer project, the last of a three-year recording project in Santa Clara County, was completed under the general direction of John Poppeliers, Chief of HABS; Kenneth L. Anderson, Jr., Principal Architect; and Sybil Groff, Project Supervisor (Columbia University); with David Schaaf, Architectural foreman (Carnegie Mellon University); Jan Cigliano (Oberlin College); and student architects William Coppa (University of Virginia), Jon Lourie (University of Maryland), Anne Munley (Princeton University), John Murphy (Texas Tech University), and Matthew Poe (Virginia Polytechnic University), at the HABS Field office in Santa Clara, California. The drawings were edited in the HABS Washington office in the summer of 1979 by architect David Schaaf. The historical and architectural data were edited by Jan Cigliano and Denys Peter Myers, architectural historians on the HABS staff in 1979 and 1981. Photographs were taken by photographer Jane Lidz in the summer of 1980.